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OIRA-5029

Italy 3699

BUSINESS

19 August 1954

Chief, WE
ATTN: Chief, Italian Branch
Senior Representative, []

Information from MA Re Karl HAAS and Ministry of Interior

Ref: MIR-11304, []-8669, OIRA-5031 (KAPOK-3700)

1. On 3 August 1954, Major Oren Moffett, Assistant Military Attache, brought in a note concerning Karl HAAS which, he explained, he felt would be of interest to us. He stated that the note was a paraphrase of a cable which the Military Attache had recently sent to Washington. This appears to be the basis of the information contained in first reference.

2. The paraphrase is as follows:

"Ex-German SD Maj Karl Haas, said to be long-time double agent now living in Rome, is afraid that he may become involved in investigation conducted by Western Intelligence of the defection of Otto John. Haas claims to have had contact with no less than 3 members of John's intelligence net. At least one of these persons was suspected of having had dealings with the Soviet. Reported that John, in his denunciation of Nazi infiltration of the Bonn Intelligence service, which was broadcast over the German radio at 0200 hours 24 Jul 54, mentioned the name of HAAS."

3. We told Moffett that we knew of HAAS as a long-time operator in Rome and were interested in his activities. We added that identification of the source of the information which Moffett was giving us might add to the picture of HAAS' contacts, and possibly throw light on the motives of whoever had brought this information to the MA's attention. We also took the opportunity to suggest to Moffett the advantages which he himself would derive in the way of protection from a regular check of his contacts and sources with us, and assured him that purely in the interest of the security of the MA's office, we would at all times be happy to run such checks. Since it was evident that Moffett did not desire to reveal his informant, we did not press further. He did state, however, that his informant was not HAAS himself, and that it was not an Italian official. He added that the informant had been in touch with the MA's office some years before but that this contact had lapsed.

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4. On 11 August the MA, Colonel Dawson, who had just returned to Rome, called on [] and gave us a copy of his Top Secret report of 10 August 1954, Serial S-24-54, subject: Italian Ministry of Interior Effort to Penetrate U.S. Intelligence in Italy. Although Headquarters may have ready and immediate access to this document in Washington, we are nevertheless attaching hereto a photo reproduction of the copy handed us. We expressed appreciation of the MA's courtesy in showing us this report and inquired as to whether or not he wished to identify the source of the information to us. Dawson said that he did not desire to identify the source, and that he had explicitly told Moffett not to reveal the source of this information in connection with Moffett's original call. He stated that the reason for this was that the informant "belonged" to one of the Italian services with whom he, Dawson, believed us to be in touch. He further added that he was endeavoring to discourage contact with this informant with his own office, lest the Italians suspect that the MA was endeavoring to use one of their own agents against them. In view of this feeling on Dawson's part, we, of course, did not press for identification of his informant.

5. At this point, in view of the fact that HAAS was indicated as sub-source of S-24-54, the recent [] cables []-8653, 8635 and 8634 which, in effect, constitute a debriefing of HAAS on the part of [] plus the fact that we know the MA's office to have had contact with [] in 1949-50 (suggest [] be queried on this point), it appeared most likely that [] was the MA's source.

6. We cannot, at present, properly evaluate the allegations contained in S-24-54. It is by no means impossible that an investigation has been undertaken, and it is quite possible that Scelba, personally, may be interested in clandestine American operations here. This we will endeavor to find out more about. Meanwhile, the first question that comes to mind in reading this document is the motive behind its being given to the MA. So far as motive goes, it may well fit into the picture of guerrilla warfare in which [] appears to be engaged (see GIRA-4801 (KAPOK-358)).

7. On 26 July, MAZZOCCHI of FOA told [] that he had been informed by one ORTOLANI of a plan initiated by SIPAR to confuse or compromise MAZZOCCHI's activity in Italy. ORTOLANI had previously told MAZZOCCHI of an alleged plan on the part of [] to take over the police. The whole flavor of these allegations on the part of ORTOLANI were so strongly reminiscent of KAPOK-3588 as to suggest that the approach to MAZZOCCHI was a deliberate effort to raise doubts in American minds of SIPAR's purpose and good faith. [] memorandum on this conversation is being forwarded under GIRA-5031 (KAPOK-3700).

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2. Against this background, S-24-54 looks like a counter-move to blacken [] and his colleagues in U.S. eyes, possibly with the expectation that the information would be promptly brought to KENNEDY's attention. This is the first tentative conclusion we have reached in discussion among ourselves here. There is a sense of the feeling which has developed here between Interior and SIFAR, of which we do not yet have the full picture of full flavor, and which can produce bad results for ourselves.

Enclosure - 1
Partially by 45 of
in S-24-54, 10 Aug 54

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